

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 290400Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9185

UNCLAS SANA 3381

JOINT EMBASSY USAID MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, YE

SUBJECT: FSL WAGE SCHEDULE

REF: (A) SANA 2182, (B) SANA 2627, (C) SANA 2907

(D) STATE 229337

1. MISSION HAS ACCEPTED NEW SCALE CONTAINED IN REFTEL

(D) RFD WILL IMPLEMENT ON 26 SEPTEMBER.

2. HOWEVER, WE MUST CONSIDER THIS ONLY A STOP-GAP MEASURE SINCE LABOR MARKET AND TYPE OF FIRMS HIRING OUR PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE MISSION HAS CHANGED CONSIDERABLY SINCE APRIL 1976. TO EMPHASIZE THE CRITICAL NATURE OF THE MISSION POSITION IN YEMEN WE ARE QUOTING THE MAIN BODY OF A TELEGRAM THAT WAS PREPARED BY USAID AND WAS GOINT OUT AS A JOINT MESSAGE JUST PRIOR TO RECEIVING REFTEL (D). PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THAT THE RESIGNATIONS/TERMINATION LISTED BELOW ARE FOR USAID

ONLY. EMBASSY HAS HAD 26 RESIGNATIONS YEAR-TO-DATE.

QTE:

1. FURING THRREE-MONTH PERIOD JUNE 1 THROUGH AUGUST 31, USAID LOST THE FOLLOWING EIGHTY REPEAT EIGHTY LOCAL HIRE EMPLOYEES THROUGH RESIGNATIONS (SEVENTY) AND OTHER TERMINATIONS (TEN): 1 PROGRAM ECONOMIST, 1 ADMIN ASST I, 1 ACCOUNTANT/CASHIER, 3 GENERAL CLERKS, 5 CLERK-TYPISTS (THRES MORE HAVE RESIGNED SINCE END OF AUGUST), 1 SHOP

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FOREMAN, 1 WAREHOUSE FOREMAN, 1 WAREHOUSEMAN, 1 HYDROLOGY

FIELD ASST, 3 ELECTRICITANS, 2 CARPENTERS, 2 PLUMBERS,
2 WELDERS, 3 MECHANICS, 4 MECHANIC HELPERS, 2 TIRE
REPARIMEN, 1 WELL DRILLER, 1 WELL DRILLER HELPER, 1 ROD-AND-
CHAINMAN, 1 MESSENGER, 3 HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS, 6
DRIVERS, 7 WAREHOUSE LABORERS, \$ 27 GENERAL LABORERS.

2. IF THIS ATTRITION RATE -- EQUIVALENT TO MORE THAN
100 PERCENT ANNUALLY DOES NOT ADEQUATELY DEMONSTRATE INADEQUACY
OF PRESENT WAGE SCALE FOR LOCALS WE FRANKLY DO NOT KNOW
WHAT WILL SATISFY WASHINGTON AND CONVEY THE CRITICALITY
OF OUR SITUATION. EVEN THE TEN WHO WERE TERMINATED
UNDERScore PROBLEM SINCE ALL WERE RECENT DESPARATION
HIRES WHO REPLACED BETTER QUALIFIED PREDECESSORS WHO
HAD PREVIOUSLY RESIGNED IN PROTEST OF OUR NON-COMPETITIVE WAGE
SACLE. UNFORTUNATELY, THESE REPLACEMENTS WERE UNABLE TO
PERFORM SATISFACTORILY SO WHERE RELUCTANTLY RELEASED AFTER
ONLY FEW MONTHS TRIAL.

3. USAID HAS FEED BACK ON MORE THAN HALF OF THHESE EIGHTY
DEPARTED LOCAL PERSONNEL. MAJORITY HAVE FOUND JOBS
WHTHIN YMEN REPEAT WITHIN YEMEN AT CONSIDERABLY MORE
ATTRACTIVE PAY AND BENEFITS, E.G., APPROXIMATELY TWENTY
OF 34 LABORERS NOW KNOWN TO BE WITH MAREB OR BEYDA
ROAD PROJECTS OR SAUDI-JAPENESE WELL DRILLING OPERATION
AT YR 1,000 PER MONTH VERSUS USAID SALARY YR 506 PER
MONTH, AT LEAST 3 DRIVERS ALSO WITH THESE PROJECTS AT
YR 1200 PER MONTH VERSUS USAID SALARIES YR 622
TO YR 738 PER MONTH, WELL DRILLER YR 1500 VERSUS
YR 868, CARPENTER YR 1600 VS YR 868, HEAVY EQUIPMENT
OPERATOR YR 1700 VS YR 868, ROD-AND-CHAINMAN YR 1200
VS YR 506, MECHANIC YR 1300 VERSUS YR 764, MECHANICS
HELPER YR 2000 VS YT 1068, CLERK TYPIST YT 1200 VS
YR 506, GENERAL CLERK YR 1500 PLUS HOUSING VS
YR 1004, ECONOMIST WITH BANK AT YR 3000 PLUS HOUSING
VS YR 2295.

IN ADDITION AT LESAST FIVE HAVE FOUND JOBS IN TAIZ AT REPUTEDLY
SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER WAGES, IN AT LEAST ONE INSTANCE
"INCLUDING HOUSING. ONLY FIVE ARE KNOWN TO HAVE GONE TO
SAUDI ARABIA AND ONE TO ABU DHABI. MAJORITY ARE FINDING
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MORE REMUNERATIVE PSITIONS RIGHT HERE IN THE YEMEN.

4. LOCAL PERSONNEL CLERK ADVISES THAT (A) WE ARE HAVING
NO SUCCESS WHATSOEVER IN FINDING REPLACEMENTS FOR
RESIGNING PERSONNEL DUE TO OUR COMPARATIVELY LOW WAGES,
(B) FROM SCUTTLEBUTT HE HAS HEARD HE ANTICIPATES ANOTHER
TWENTY OR SO RESIGNATIONS FROM AMONG DRIVERS AND SHOP
PERSONNEL IN NEAR FUTURE, AND (C) HE HIMSELF HAS BEEN

OFFERED YR 2000 PER MONTH PLUS HOUSING AS COMPARED TO PRESENT USAID SALARY OF YR 1267 EXCLUDING HOUSING, I.E., ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO A 100 PERCENT INCREASE. IF WE LOSE HIM, WE'RE IN BIG TROUBLE.

FYI: 68 OF THE EMPLOYEES LISTED IN PARA 1 ABOVE WERE EMPLOYED TONZROVIDE DIRECT SUPPORT TO MISION PROJECT ACTIVITIES. THEREFORE, NOT ONLY HAS THE LOW WAGE SCALE AFFECTED INTERNAL MISSION OPERATIONS, IT HAS SEVERELY HANDICPPED US IN ACHIEVING PROGRAM OBJECTIVES. SHOULD THE SITUATION DETERIORATE FURTHER AND WE SOO NO REASON WHY IT WILL NOT OUR WHILE AID EFFORT IN YEMEN WILL SUFFER. END FYI
END QTE

3. FROM THE QUOTED SECTION ABOVE DEPARTMENT IS NOT TOTALLY AWARE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE FSL PERSONNEL SITUATION HERE IN YEMEN. WHILE THE ENTIRE MISSION APPRECIATES THE SLIGHT INCREASE GRANTED IN REFTTEL (D) THE DEPARTMENT MUST REALIZE THAT PERSONNEL IN KEY RPT KEY GRADES (FSL 6,7,8,) ARE STILL UNDER SAVED RATE CONDITIONS DATING BACK TO COMP PLAN OF 1 FEBRUARY , 1976.

4. IN A CONTINUING EFFORT TO STOP THE CRIPPLING EFFECT OF RESIGNATION EMBASSY HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE ANOTHER FULL WAGE SURVEY FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

(A) CHANGE IN TYPE AND NUMBER OF FIRMS HIRING PEOPLE WITH SKILLS NEEDED WITHIN THE MISSION PRECLUDES USE OF SPOT CHECK METHODS,
(B) MIX OF FIRMS USED IN APRIL 1976 WAGE SURVEY WAS NOT TRUE PICTURE OF YEMEN JOB MARKET AS EVIDENCE
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BY LARGE INCREASES NEEDED BY UNDP AND BRITISH EMBASSY TO RETAIN QUALIFIED PERSONNEL.

(C) NEW FIRMS HAVE APPEARED IN YEMEN WITH ABILITY TO HIRE AWAY KEY PERSONNEL FROM MISSION.

5. TO CONDUCT SUCH A SURVEY MISSION REQUESTS ASSISTANCE FROM DEPARTMENT AND BUREAU BY ASSIGNING QUALIFIED AMERICAN OR FSLE PERSONS ON TDY TO SANA ASAP IN ORDER TO CONDUCT A PROPER WAGE SURVEY. WE MUST REQUEST SUCH ASSISTANCE SINCE EMBASSY ATTEMPT IN SEPTEMBER 1975 TO CONDUCT PROPER WAGE SURVEY AND DEPARTMENT TEAM EFFORTS (APRIL 1976) HAVE BOTH BEEN "TOO SUBJECTIVE."

6. MISSION REALIZES THAT SUCH A REQUEST PLACES A LARGE

BURDEN ON DEPARTMENT BUT WE ARE NOW SO UNDERSTAFFED
(USAID ALONE REQUIRES AT LEAST TEN LOCAL SECRETARIES;
ONLY FSLE SECRETARY/PERSONNEL POSITION IN EMBASSY STILL
REMAINS VACANT) THAT IF WE WAIT FURTHER THE SITUATION
WILL ONLY GET WORSE.
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